

# COMMISSIONERS' MINUTES – DAVIS COUNTY

## WORK SESSION MINUTES

January 31, 2023

The Board of Davis County Commissioners met for a Work Session at 8:30 a.m. on January 31, 2023, in room 306 of the Davis County Administration Building, 61 South Main Street, Farmington, Utah. Notice of this meeting was given under the requirements of UCA § 52-4-202.

AGENDA AS  
POSTED

Roll Call

**8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. Sale of Animals Ordinance Discussion** - *Presented by Animal Care Director Ashleigh Young*

DISCLAIMER

The meeting was an open dialogue. Critical points in the discussion have only been briefly summarized. The reader may refer to the audio recording and the publicly distributed materials for further clarification of the content. Timestamps have been noted in the minutes to aid in locating points of discussion in the audio record. The audio recording for this meeting is available based upon the County's current retention schedule.

All documents from this meeting are on file in the Davis County Clerk's Office.

ROLL CALL

Davis County Commissioners in attendance: Lorene Miner Kamalu, Chair; Bob J Stevenson, Vice-Chair; and Randy B. Elliott.

Davis County Staff in attendance: Rian-Paige Santoro, Deputy Clerk; Brian McKenzie, Clerk; Neal Geddes, Chief Civil Deputy Attorney; Kent Andersen, Community and Economic Development Director; Curtis Koch, Auditor; Ashleigh Young, Animal Care Director; Sydney Larrabe, Animal Care Deputy Director; Robert Tripp, Civil Attorney; and Shauna Brady, Commission Office.

Others in attendance: Amy Motta, Bailing Out Benji; Paul Zuckerman, Humane Society of the United States; Kim Valeika, Davis County Resident; James Townsend; Animal Park; Jodi, Animal Park; and Laurie Eccleston, Layton City Resident.

Virtually in attendance: Arlynn Bradshaw, Best Friends; Elizabeth Oreck, Best Friends; Michelle Dosson, Best Friends; Nick Lippincott, Best Friends; Tracy Kelly, Best Friends; Bridget Dunbeck, Best Friends; Alexis Beason, Best Friends; Curtis Grayhard, Davis County Resident; and Alyssa Miller, Pet Advocacy Network.

The meeting commenced at 8:32 a.m.

WORK SESSION  
DISCUSSION

**Presentation of the “Sales of Animals Ordinance”** - *Presented by Animal Care Director Ashleigh Young (Minute 04:16)*

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The Animal Care Director presented a Powerpoint. Discussions were held in conjunction with the slides as they were presented.

(See Attachment A)

Ashleigh Young explained that Animal Care has been working to have unified Animal Care and Control Ordinances as they move to a new funding model. The importance of this ordinance being added to the County Code was agreed upon by all of the City Managers within the County.

Studies on dogs and puppies from large scale commercial breeding facilities published by the Applied Animal Behavior Science Journal and the Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association were shared. The results of both of those studies showed severe, extensive, and long-term harm to the behavioral and psychological well-being of the dogs and puppies.

The Animal Care Director stated that individuals are asked where they acquired the pet when a pet is surrendered. She reported that between January 1, 2022, and January 1, 2023, 41 pets were surrendered that had been purchased from pet stores and only 6 pets were surrendered that had been received from local, small-scale breeders, proving that Davis County is impacted by pet stores. She also reported that 90% of the pets surrendered are due to behavioral problems.

It was noted that all United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Kennel Reports are available online and show extensive data proving that large-scale commercial breeders are detrimental to not only the dog but to the people who are taking the dog home.

Commissioner Kamalu shared documentation that was received via email by the Commission Office from Best Friends Humane Society. The documents include research studies, the Breeder Club Code of Ethics, and a letter that was written on behalf of Best Friends Animal Society and their thousands of Utah members, supporters, partners, and staff in support of the proposed ordinance.

(See Attachments B1-B4)

Federal and local governmental oversight was discussed among the Commissioners and the Civil Attorneys.

**PUBLIC  
COMMENT**

(Minute 48:08) Commissioner Kamalu opened the meeting up for public comments and noted that the Commission Office received several emails in support of the ordinance.

James Townsend, the owner of Animal Park, was attending in opposition to the ordinance. He spoke about his business and explained the steps he takes to vet his suppliers and the puppies he sells.

Ashleigh Young responded to James' comment by reporting that Animal Care discovered that several of the puppies that Animal Park had listed as available in January 2022 came from non-USDA licensed kennels. She went on to state that there were dogs with significant findings on their USDA Reports as well.

James stated that the information Ashleigh had was not from his website and are not the dogs he had in his store.

Ashleigh confirmed that these dogs were seen in the Animal Park store in January 2022 by Animal Care employees.

James then stated that the dogs the Animal Care Director referenced were the original puppies his store received, and claimed that any issues that were found had since been resolved.

Clerk Brian McKenzie spoke about "safe exchange" places that citizens will designate within the community and asked if the transfer of animals would be prohibited in those locations given that the ordinance states it will be unlawful to sell animals in public places. The Animal Care Director stated it would be unlawful as the ordinance stands now but said that is something she will look in to as that had not been considered.

Amy Motta, a volunteer with Bailing Out Benji, reported having testimonies from former employees of Animal Park who were too fearful to attend the meeting as they were forced to sign non-disclosure agreements. Amy proceeded to read from one of those testimonies which reported the low level of care the puppies received.

James Townsend, the owner of Animal Park, rebutted the testimonies reported by Amy, stating that they

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were from disgruntled employees. He reported that complaints were also made to Animal Care, who responded and found the claims to be unfounded.

The Pet Advocacy Network noted that they do not support a full ban on the sale of pets. They advocate for stricter legal requirements to be put into place. Alyssa Miller from that network said that Connecticut is a good example of the success in that, stating the strict restrictions they have put into place have helped in reducing the bad actors from performing business in their state.

The property owner of Animal Park discussed these issues from a business/retailer standpoint, speaking in opposition to the ordinance.

Enforcement of the County Code and Davis County’s authority over the Animal Care and Control in its cities was discussed in some detail.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:57 a.m.

**MATERIALS  
PRESENTED**

All publicly distributed materials associated with this meeting are noted as the following attachments:

- A. Sales of Animals Ordinance
- B. Best Friends Animal Society
  - B1. Breeder Clubs Codes of Ethics
  - B2. Letter in support of ordinance
  - B3. Dr. Frank McMillan Studies
  - B4. Responsible vs Irresponsible chart

Minutes prepared by:  
Rian-Paige Santoro

Minutes approved on: 2/21/2023

/s/ Brian McKenzie  
Brian McKenzie  
Davis County Clerk

/s/ Loren Miner Kamalu  
Lorene Miner Kamalu  
Commission Chair

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